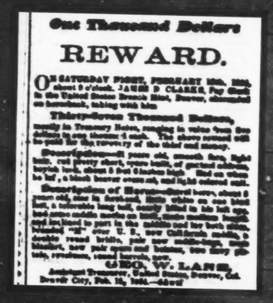
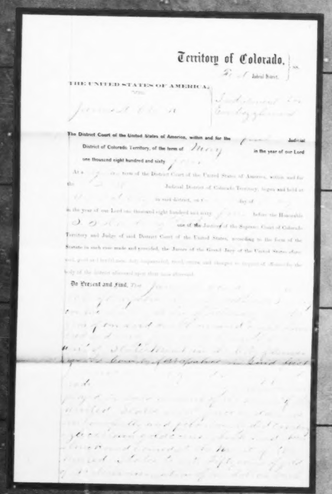
ROBBERY

1


One Thousand Dollars
REWARD.

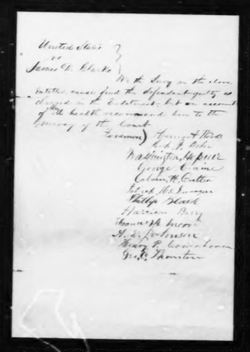
2


Territory of Colorado,
THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

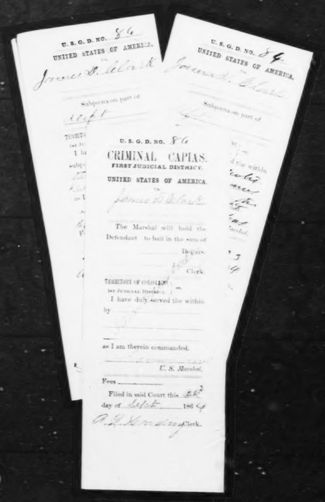
3

4

5


United States
vs
James D. Clarke

6


U. S. C. D. NO.
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,
CRIMINAL CAPIAS.
FIRST JUDICIAL DISTRICT.
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

7

The 1864 Denver Mint robbery was the crime of the century, at least to the disbelieving citizens of the Colorado Territory. The robbery was the work of a young man whose "Eastern connections" had led to his appointment as a pay clerk at the mint. James D. Clarke, considered a pillar of Denver society, was an unlikely criminal.

But Clarke failed to fulfill the Denver community's high expectations. He began frequenting gambling saloons and other disreputable establishments. Personal vice soon led to crime. One winter Saturday night, Clarke bid his colleagues good evening as usual, and left the mint, but returned hours later. Gaining access to nearly $38,000 in gold and notes through a window he had propped open with a pencil, he stuffed his saddlebags full and rode out of town on a half-blind horse.

Clarke became the main suspect in the crime when he failed to appear for work on Monday morning. He was apprehended several days later and tried in federal court for embezzling federal funds. The jury found him guilty as charged, and the court banished him from the Colorado Territory. Once a young man of promise, James D. Clarke faded into obscurity.

Unless credited otherwise, documents are from the National Archives, Records of District Courts of the United States.
1. Bank and Mint Building, Denver, Colorado, ca. 1860
Colorado Historical Society
2. Notice of reward, *Rocky Mountain News*, February 15, 1864
Colorado Historical Society
3. "Indictment for Embezzlement," May 13, 1864
4. U.S. Mint money bag, n.d.
Private collection
5. Gold ingots, 1988
J. Class / Tony Stone Worldwide, Chicago
6. Verdict, September 29, 1864
7. Subpoenas to witnesses and criminal capias, September 1864

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